

# **Oral Health: An Essential Component of Health Care Reform**

**Utah Oral Health Coalition**

**December 16, 2008**

# Utah Oral Health Coalition

## Public/Private Partnership

- Dental and Medical Community
- State and Local Health Departments
- Policy Makers
- Advocacy Organizations
- Community Health Centers
- Multicultural Representation
- Dental and Medical Insurance Agencies

# Oral Health

**Oral health is an integral and important part of general health ... vital to the development of children and the effectiveness of adults.**



# Dental Disease Can Lead to ...

Extreme pain

Spread of infection

Extensive and costly dental and medical treatment

Missed school and work days

Unemployability

DEATH



# **Dental Infections Can Contribute to Adverse Health Complications**

**Begin as Dental Infections and spread to:**

- Chest near the heart
- Brain

**Interactions with Systemic Diseases:**

- Diabetes
- Cardiovascular Disease
- Premature Birth
- Pneumonia

# Diabetes: A Systemic Disease

Leading cause  
of blindness  
in working age  
adults<sup>1</sup>



**Diabetic  
Retinopathy**

Periodontal  
disease increased  
in diabetes



**Periodontal  
Disease**



**Diabetic  
Nephropathy**  
Leading cause of  
end-stage renal disease<sup>3</sup>



**Stroke**

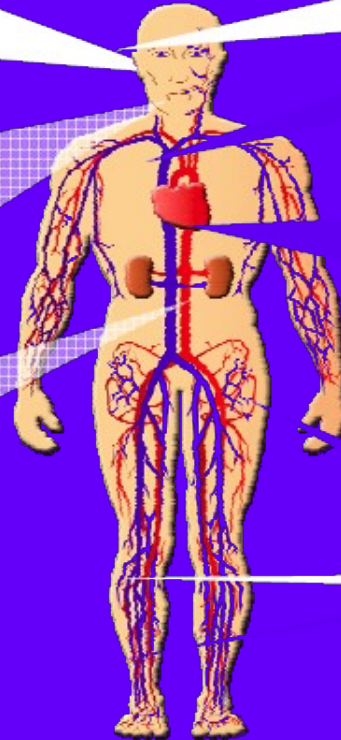
2- to 4- fold  
increase in  
cardiovascular  
mortality  
and stroke<sup>2</sup>



**Cardiovascular  
Disease**



**Diabetic  
Neuropathy**  
Leading cause of non-traumatic  
lower extremity amputations<sup>4</sup>



# Early and Preventive Care

- For far too long, the mouth has not been viewed as part of the body.
- Scientific evidence has demonstrated that early and preventive dental care not only improves oral health but also lowers the risk and severity of associated health conditions.

# Medical Insurance Costs

- Aetna discovered that increasing access to oral health care for patients with diabetes and heart disease reduced overall medical care costs by as much as 16 percent.



# Consequences

- When individuals do not receive basic oral health services, their general health is affected and their untreated dental disease progresses until it ultimately requires complicated and expensive medical treatment and may even lead to death.

*Oral Health is an Essential Component of  
Health Care Reform*

# Coalition Request

- Oral health be recognized as an integral and important part of overall health and a component of health care reform.
- Health care programs provide for access to fundamental dental services.

# **Utah Oral Health Coalition Membership**

**Voices for Utah Children  
Intermountain Pediatric Society  
Salt Lake Valley Health Department  
Intermountain Healthcare  
Utah Dental Association  
Alliance to the Utah Dental Association  
Association for Utah Community Health  
Community Health Centers, Inc.  
Center for Multicultural Health  
Utah Dental Hygienist's Association  
Salt Lake Community Action Program  
United Way of Greater Salt Lake  
Sealants for Smiles  
Regence Blue Cross Blue Shield Caring Foundation for Children**

**Primary Children's Medical Center  
University of Utah Dental Education  
Salt Lake Donated Dental Services  
Utah Health Policy Project  
Health Access Project  
Utah Medical Education Council  
Health Access Team  
Utah Department of Health  
Area Health Education Centers  
Coalition for Medicaid Consumers  
Community Health Connect  
Utah March of Dimes**

**Thank You!**